CREATIVITY AND PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RELATION TO GENDER, SOCIAL CATEGORY AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY

A
SYNOPSIS

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INTRODUCTION

Progress, prosperity and quality of a nation is reflected by its strong educational system and depend upon the quality education being imparted to its people. Education is a lifelong process, every event and experience of life facilitates individual to understand self as well as environment. Human beings are uniquely blessed with capabilities, potentialities and powers to learn and to be educated. Education unfolds the individual's innate capabilities, potentialities and powers in a harmonious manner. The aim of education is to develop human being; socially, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually to become a productive member of a civilized society. To achieve the aims of education schools are expected to play a significant and pivot role. In this manner school teacher occupies a strategic position and has to play a significant and crucial role in the building of a nation as well as its citizens. Quality and significance of the role of the school depends on the effectiveness of the teachers. The effectiveness and qualities of the teacher depends on so many factors but the emotional maturity, creativity and problem solving ability play a great role in the present scenario of education and societies globally.

Creativity:

Creativity refers to the ability to create something, new and has some value for the human beings. New or novel means here the unusual nature of the thing created. The production of something new is greatly emphasized. The value means that the product of creativity should have value to society. There are two perspectives of creativity i.e. product or process. Product perspective defines creativity in terms of output (product) of creative effort, whereas process perspective of creativity emphasis the thinking process involved in creating the novel and value product. The social, cultural, political, economic and the scientific progress of any country depend on the extent of the development of creativity among its citizens. Creativity among teachers is utmost important in education because "teaching for creativity '' has become a flourishing and global trend in the current educational scenario.

Creativity and imagination are unique gifts to mankind which have not only created culture and aesthetic beauty in the form of art, music, architecture, poetry and literature, but also have been the seeds from which all of our society, technological, educational and scientific advancements has sprung. The disposition of creative application is inherent in all

human beings. It is the environment, which either supports or represses the opportunity for creative development. Creativity needs to be nurtured throughout our lives to stay active and vital. Creativity is possible in all areas of human activity, including the arts, sciences, at work, at play, and in all other areas of daily life. All people have creative abilities and we all have them differently. Developing creativity involves, amongst others, deepening young people's cultural knowledge and understanding. This is essential both in itself and to promote forms of education which are inclusive to culture diversity and change.

According to Lowenfeld, "Creativity is an instinct with which all people are born, a basic drive without which man cannot exist."

Stein (1978) describe "Creativity is a process which results in a novel work that is accepted as tenable to useful or satisfying to a group of people at some point in future."

Paplia and olds (1987) have said that "Creativity is the ability to see the things in a new and unusual light, to see problem that no one else may even realize exist, and then to come up with new effective solution."

Thus creativity involves thinking in a novel way to arrive at original ideas. It extends our knowledge and experience which take us from known to novel. It includes flexibility, divergent thought, originality and the ability to organize perceptions and emotions.

Problem Solving Ability

Problems come in all shapes and sizes .The problems may be simple or complex and may vary in importance from insignificant to critical. Some problems may be solved regular manner and some other may require creative, novel solutions. Problem solving involves mentally working to overcome obstacles that stand in the way of reaching a goal. When a person desires to achieve some objects or goal, he has a problem before him and therefore, he tries to solve it. The ability to solve problem will depend on the clarity of goals as well as situation or circumstance in which person finds himself. Thus it is apparent that the problem solving ability in kind of higher mental ability and requires special education and training .It is essential exercise for individual advancement as also for the advancement of society.

Problem solving ability focuses on the level of performance. It depends on the manner in which an individual procure, accumulate, retrieve, and transform information to get the solutions. Knowing about problem solving ability provides us valuable information to know and utilize our strengths and to become more aware of some of the risks and limitations that may be associated with our ability to solve problems. When an individual is aware of his abilities he/she can also recognize when there is a need to work outside his natural

preferences and strengths. Moreover, knowledge of ability gives us helpful information about how to work effectively and productively with others, whose ability and preferences differ from our own. It will help the individual to work efficiently and effectively. Therefore it is useful to know about problem solving ability and there optimum use.

R.S. Woodworth and Marquis (1959) have pointed out that problem solving behavior occurs in novel or difficult situation in which a solution is not obtainable by the habitual method of applying from past experience in very similar situations.

Skinner (1959) "Problem solving is a process of overcoming difficulties that appear to interface with the attainment of a goal. It is a procedure of making adjustment inspite of interference."

Reed (2000) states, "Problem solving, an effort to overcome obstacles obstructing the path to solution"

Problem solving is considered a goal directed cognitive activity and goal is to remove the obstacles obstructing the path of successful solution. Its success depends on the efficiency with which an individual carries out certain mental operations involved in problem solving process.

Emotional Maturity:

We can not imagine life without emotions. Emotions are the corner stone's of every relationship in our lives, importance and the power of those emotions cannot be ignored. Emotions often override our behaviour without our awareness and whether we like it or not. Emotions influence physical, intellectual, and social aspects of personality. Therefore emotional maturity is essential for harmonious development of personality. In the present circumstances adults as well as children facing difficulties in life. These difficulties are giving rise to many psychosomatic problems such as anxiety, tension, fears, worries, frustration, irritability, emotional upsets and find it hard to achieve the desired goal. Mostly they achieve less than what they expected to achieve. These negative feelings must be replaced by the feeling of hope courage. Emotional maturity enables an individual to develop an integrated and balanced way of perceiving the problems of life whereas emotionally disturbed individuals are unable to maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationship at home, at work place and in society. Emotional maturity is a process in which the personality is continuously struggling for Greater sense of emotional health, both intra-psychically and intra-personally.

Kaplan and Boron (1986) articulated that emotionally mature person possessed the capacity to withstand delay in satisfaction of needs. He has the ability to tolerate frustration to a reasonable amount. He is capable of delaying or revising his expectation in terms of demands or situations. He is free from unreasonable fear and is able to enjoy his daily activities.

According to Seoul (1951) if the emotional development of the individual is relatively complete, his adaptability is high, his regression tendencies are low and his vulnerability is minimal.

Emotional maturity is not to resolve all adaptability issues that aroused anxiety and hostility, vulnerability and regression tendencies but is continuously in a struggle to gain healthy integration of feeling, thinking, action, and positive attitude towards life as long as he/she lives.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"CREATIVITY AND PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RELATION TO GENDER, SOCIAL CATEGORY AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY"

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the present time of change it has been observed that less importance is being paid to the emotional maturity, creativity and problem solving ability of a teacher. This is resulting in monotonous classroom environment and decreasing quality of education. Therefore it has become important and necessary to explore these factors which influence the effectiveness of the teacher as well as education system.

Teacher has the potential and position for enhancing creativity among pupils by deploying creative teaching-learning strategies. With creativity he/she can bring life to curriculum and inspire students to solve their learning as well as personal problems creatively with curiosity and self directed learning. Therefore, study of creativity among teachers is of great importance.

The problem solving ability of the teacher determines the progress of pupils as in present work conditions of a teacher every dawn brings numerous challenges to be resolved during the day without letting teaching –learning process affected. Sometime teaching learning process itself becomes challenging for an elementary school teacher when individual differences come alive in the class and teaching strategies prove inappropriate, ineffective and insignificant. In such crucial condition teacher must be able to solve problems at his own.

Emotional maturity and creativity of the teacher also play immense role to come out with alternative solutions to the problems.

Emotions are at the heart of teaching. Effective and creative teaching is charged with positive emotions. Highly emotionally mature teachers can be more creative and can encounter problems effectively while interacting with children and environment. Emotionally immature teacher can easily be carried away with his emotions and get frustrated or disheartened as such causing delay and obstacles in achieving goals of creative endeavors. He/she can also not encounter problems creatively as it requires time and tolerance.

Emotional maturity, creativity and problem solving ability of a teacher are the important factors which not only improves the performance but also the effectiveness of the teacher. These factors have a potential not to impact the professional as well as personal life of the teacher. Taking into consideration these factors the present study is meaningful effort to study emotional maturity, creativity, problem solving ability of elementary school teachers. In case of poor and average emotional maturity, creativity and use of problem solving ability investigator will try to suggest means and measures to strengthen these factors so that the teacher may become more effective. This study will provide a rational for policy makers, administrators and teachers to make classroom teaching –learning process effective and fruitful. It will also add to the corpus of knowledge related to the field of emotional maturity, creativity and problem solving ability. It is pertinent to mention that no such study has been conducted in the state before. The present research become significant as it caters exclusively to the unique flavor, culture and needs of the state of Himachal Pradesh.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To study and compare creativity of elementary school teachers with respect to
    a) Gender
    b) Social Category
    c) Emotional Maturity
2) To study double and triple interaction effect of
    a) Gender and Social Category
    b) Gender and Emotional Maturity
    c) Social Category and Emotional Maturity
    d) Gender, Social Category and Emotional Maturity

3) To study and compare problem solving ability of elementary school teachers with respect to
   a) Gender
   b) Social Category
   c) Emotional Maturity
4) To study double and triple interaction effect of
   a) Gender and Social Category
   b) Gender and Emotional Maturity
   c) Social Category and Emotional Maturity
   d) Gender, Social Category and Emotional Maturity

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1) There will be no significant difference in the creativity of elementary school teachers with respect to
   a) Gender
   b) Social Category
   c) Emotional Maturity
2) There will be no significant interaction effect on creativity of elementary school teachers with respect to
   a) Gender and Social Category
   b) Gender and Emotional Maturity
   c) Social Category and Emotional Maturity
   d) Gender, Social Category and Emotional Maturity
3) There will be no significant difference in the problem solving ability of elementary school teachers with respect to
   a) Gender
   b) Social Category
   c) Emotional Maturity
4) There will be no significant interaction effect on problem solving ability of elementary school teachers with respect to
   a) Gender and Social Category
   b) Gender and Emotional Maturity
   c) Social Category and Emotional Maturity
   d) Gender, Social Category and Emotional Maturity

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

The present study will be delimited in the following manners:

1 The study will be restricted to Government schools affiliated with H.P. Board of School Education, Dharamshala, District-Kangra.

2 The study will be restricted to Government elementary school teachers, teaching first to fifth classes.

4 The study will be restricted to four Districts out of twelve districts of Himachal Pradesh.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

1. **EMOTIONAL MATURITY-** refers to perceived emotional maturity as measured by 'Emotional Maturity Scale' by Singh and Bhargava.

2. **CREATIVITY-** refers to the verbal creativity comprised of three elements fluency, flexibility and originality as measured by 'Passi Test of Creativity' of B.K. Passi.

3. **PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY -** refers to a level of performance to overcome difficulties that obstruct the path of attaining goals.

4. **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER-** refers to teachers who teach elementary classes from 1^{st} to 5^{th} in Government schools affiliated to H.P. Board of school Education, Dharamshala, District- Kangra.

5. **GENDER-** refers to male and female elementary school teachers.

6. **SOCIAL CATEGORY**- refers to Government elementary school teachers belonging to open and reserved category according to the norms of Government of Himachal Pradesh.

    - OPEN CATEGORY- open category Government elementary school teachers refer to purely general category according to the norms of State Government.
    - RESERVED CATEGORY- reserved category Government elementary school teachers belong to Schedule Caste (SC), Schedule Tribes (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) according to the norms of State Government.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Goldsmith and motherly (1987) conducted a study on "Creativity and Self-esteem: A Multiple Operationalization Validity Study." The result of the study showed that self confidence and creativity are positively related. It further showed that no significant difference between the creative ability level of male and female. The relationship between creativity and self-esteem seems stronger and more consistent for females than for males.

Beckhan, Carbonell, and Gustafson (1987) conducted a study under the title "Are there Sex Difference in Problem solving? An Investigation of Problem Context and Sex Role Type" The result of study shows that, difference in problem solving were not significant related to sex or to sex roles context, long suspected as a variable in the differential problem solving between males and females, did not differentially affect problem solving, but both sexes scored better on masculine problems. The results of the study suggest that there are no significant difference in the problem solving abilities of males and females.

Hiremani, Khadi, Gaonkar, Katarki (1994) conducted a study "Comparison of Emotional Maturity and Adjustment of Destitute and Normal Adolescent Girls." The study concluded that there was significant difference between destitute and normal girls on all components of emotional maturity and total emotional maturity. Destitute girls scored high indicating. They were emotionally unstable. The results of the study also showed that most of the destitute and normal girls were in the medium range of adjustment. The difference in the mean score of adjustment was statistically non significant.

Kumar and Singh (1999) conducted "A Study of Different Dimensions of Creativity in Relation to Locality of Scheduled Cast and Non- Scheduled Cast Students." The results of the study showed that the creative thinking of the students is significantly influenced by the environment. Non- scheduled caste students also the urban group maintained its significant superiority to the rural group in all dimensions of verbal creativity and figural creativity. The study also revealed that Scheduled cast students belonging to urban locality have been found significantly superior to their rural counterpart in all the dimensions of verbal and figural creativity.

Kumar (2007) concluded that there is a significant relationship between level of educational aspiration and problem solving ability. Higher the education aspiration, higher will be the problem solving ability and vice-versa. And also there is a significant relationship between problem solving ability and academic achievement. Higher the problem solving ability, higher will be the academic achievement.

Kenchappanavar (2009) conducted a study "Emotionally Maturity of Female College Students of Bijapur." The results indicated that the female students of co-educational college have a significantly higher emotional maturity and stability as compared to the female students of woman's college.

Sood (2010) observed that male and female teacher trainees did not differ significantly with respect to their problem solving styles and no significant effect of creativity seemed to exist on any problem solving style of teacher trainees. High, average low creative teacher trainees were alike with regard to their Generator, conceptualizer, optimizer, implementer problem solving styles.

Siddiqi (2011) conducted a study under the title "A Comparative Study of Creativity among Boys and girls of class 7^{th}." The finding reveals that boys do not differ significantly in all the variables of verbal creativity, except the measures of originality from the girls.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Research Method

Descriptive research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomena and, whenever possible, to draw valid general conclusions from the facts discovered. These help to explain educational phenomena in terms of the conditions or relationship that exists, opinions that are held by the students, teachers parents and experts, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing.

In the present study researcher will use the survey descriptive method of research to accomplish the objectives of the study.

Population

The larger group of human beings and non- human entities from which a sample is selected for any research project is known as "Population".

In the present study population consists of Government elementary school teacher teaching classes from 1^{st} to 5^{th} of Himachal Pradesh.

Sample

The selected group or part which is used to ascertain the characteristics of the large group is called "sample". It may be rightly called the representative of a larger whole.

Representative Sample of atleast 400 elementary school teachers from schools of four districts of Himachal Pradesh will be selected.

Sampling

'Sampling' is the process of inferring something about a larger group of elements by studying only a part of it. Sampling procedures provide generalizations on the basis of a relatively small proportion of the population.

In the present study out of twelve districts, four districts will be selected with convenience and the sample of at least 400 Government elementary school teachers will be selected after selecting schools randomly from list of schools of four districts.

Variables

The present study will be aimed at studying the effect of independent variable namely, gender, social category and emotional maturity on dependent variables, creativity and problem solving ability.

Tools to be Used

(1) Emotional Maturity Scale (1991) by Y. Singh and M. Bhargava will be used. It measures a list of five broad factors, Emotional Unstability, Emotional Regression, Social Maladjustment, Personality Disintegration and Lack of Independence. The scale has total 48 items. All the items are rated on five point scale.

(2) Passi Test of Creativity (2001) by B. K. Passi will be used. This test measures Fluency, Flexibility, and Originality of the subject. This test includes six sub tests namely, a) seeing problem test, b) the unusual test, c) the consequences test, d) the test of inquisitiveness, e) the square puzzle test, and f) the block test of creativity.

(3) Problem Solving Ability Test will be constructed and standardized by investigator himself.

Statistical Techniques to be Used

In the present study mean, standard deviation and ANOVA will be used wherever, necessary and feasible't' test will be used.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Interpretation will be made as per analysis of the data

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study based on the analysis and interpretation of data will be listed systematically. A discussion on the results will be made highlighting their significant features and possible reasons for the obtained results.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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